



## **PARISH and SCHOOL UPDATE:**

### **Technology Plan for St. Albert the Great School**

In the 2015-2106 academic year, St. Albert the Great School formed a Technology Advisory Board (StAG TAB) to evaluate all aspects of digital technology in the school. A plan, phased for affordability, was developed for continued educational success at St. Albert School and growth in a modern digital environment. The plan is critical toward ensuring St. Albert the Great School will meet Archdiocese Standards for Technology in the computer laboratory and classroom. The StAG TAB is made up parish volunteers who are technology subject matter experts and four teachers who will implement and lead the technology changes. It is anticipated that the technology plan for the school will be implemented such that the entire parish digital infrastructure will be improved.

#### **Overview**

Technology advancement in today's digital environment provides incredible learning possibilities. Web-based curriculum and individual student access to appropriate and scholarly information are invaluable toward enhancing the quality of learning and students' higher order thinking skills. Web-based learning tools are also central in educating students about making ethical and informed decision-making within the context of the modern information age. At the same time, the advantages and opportunities of technology-based learning are restricted by high and sometimes prohibitive entry costs of technology infrastructure (for example – wireless, cabling, security, etc.) and learning tools (for example – iPads, tablets, laptops, Chromebooks, SmartBoards, etc.) that will enable group, individual and differentiated learning. Saint Albert the Great School's Technology Advisory Board – made of school administrators, faculty and subject matter experts / volunteers from the parish who work in the digital technology industry - has assessed and prioritized what is needed within the school across the next three years at a total cost of \$173,820.

**Phase 1** (Infrastructure and Group Learning) catalyzes the complete rework of the internet “plumbing” throughout the school. This will result in a stable, secure high availability internet connection while at the same time adding WiFi capability in each classroom to facilitate the use of student tables and notebooks (WiFi will not be used by student's personal phones or devices). The Phase 1 upgrade is a critical first step in moving the school towards technology-based curriculum and learning. Cost: \$70,000

**Phase 2** (Individual Student Learning Hardware) enables individual learning hardware for students and individual learning. New computer hardware will be purchased to allow blocks of students to use notebooks and iPads to participate in web based learning and classroom assignments. Desktops with compatible software will be purchased for the classrooms / faculty as well. Cost: \$31,000

**Phase 3** (Enhanced Group Learning) is the completion phase of the school upgrades. This step will provide new Smartboards and projection systems for use in the classroom and digitally based group learning and will allow obsolete overhead projectors to be phased out. These devices allow a classroom to use interactive web content and work on group projects on a white board while capturing group writing and drawing interactively. Older Smartboards have been in use for a limited number of classrooms over the past 10 years and have proven to be an invaluable learning tool. Cost: \$70,000

Initial funding for Phase 1 was approved by St. Albert Parish Council in June. Parish Council directed funding be used from the endowed Education Fund. This initial funding catalyzed the effort and enabled the Google Platform and training and purchase of 2 SmartBoards. Infrastructure updates will begin in April 2017. Initial grant proposals commenced in late summer 2016. Initial proposals have been successful and a generous award from the Kuntz Family Foundation will enable the purchase of a class set of iPads. The continued funding for the phased plan will be based on continuing to compete for external grants while also seeking interested private contributors.

**The StAG TAB thanks St. Albert Parish** for supporting the school's digitally-based educational goals and efforts to be a leading 21st Century Catholic School. If you are interested in helping or learning specific details of the phased technology plan, please contact Mr. Tom Hutchinson, the St. Albert business manager, or the school principal, Mr. Mike Kirry.